

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 7, 2005.

Claims 1, 2 and 4-20 are now in the application. Claim 20 has been allowed. Claims 3 and 21-23 have been cancelled without prejudice to their being presented in a divisional application. Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 1 and 20 are the remaining independent claims. Favorable review is respectfully requested.

The applicants wish to express their appreciation for the allowance of claim 20, and for the Examiner's statement that claim 3 recites allowable subject matter. The Examiner stated that claim 3 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In accordance with the Examiner's comments, independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of claim 3; claim 3 has thus been cancelled.

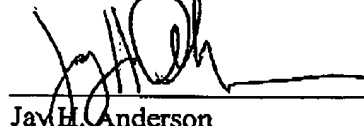
Claims 1, 2, 4 and 6-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gaillard (U.S. Pat. No. 6,531,398). In addition, claims 5 and 13-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gaillard in view of Angelopoulos (U.S. Pat. No. 6,514,667), and claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gaillard in view of Ramkumar (U.S. Pat. No. 6,436,799). It is respectfully submitted that these rejections have been overcome by the above-noted amendments to independent claim 1. Specifically, it is noted that amended claim 1 now has the same scope as previous claim 3. Claims 2 and 4-19 are each dependent from independent claim 1 and are therefore also believed to be patentable. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

Claims 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Li (U.S. Pat. No. 6,579,630). Claims 21-23 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Khanarian (U.S. Pat. Appln. Pub. No. 2003/0008244). Claims 21-23 have been cancelled, thereby rendering the rejection of those claims moot.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

The applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached by telephone at (845) 894-3667. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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